765 782 604 little of it into a glass and raises it to the lips of the old man. "He cuts his prayer" and while all the attention of the public is concentrated upon this act (which belongs also to the ritual, as the priest must be the first to partake of the offering), the wives of the batukulu rush towards the shoulders, lungs and hoofs of the goats and the bottle of wine, seize them and run away towards the west. They have stolen the meat of the sacrifice! At once all stand up and follow them laughing, shouting and pelting them with the *psanyi*, which they had kept for this purpose. The thieves hide themselves behind some bush and eat the meat. Uterine nephews are representatives of the gods, as we shall see later on, and they assert their right by stealing the offering and eating it up.

This ceremony is highly characteristic as it embodies some of the principal ideas of the Thongas in the domain of religion, social life and taboo. It was worth while describing it, and we shall refer to it later on, when dealing with sacrifices and the position of the uterine nephews in the family.

765 292 554 825 The crushing down of the hut is not performed in exactly the same manner amongst the Ba-Ronga. In the clans *South of the Bay*, they only *close* it (pfala yindlu). They dig holes in front of the door, into which they insert poles of the bush called *nhleha*, tying thorny branches horizontally to them. The shield of the deceased is placed against the door. The religious rite then takes place and from the skins of the sacrificed goats strips are cut, which the widows will have to wear *en bandoulière* during the following months of their widowhood. The astragalus bones are kept and hung round the neck. The gall-bladder is also preserved and fixed in the hair of the new master of the village as a sign of his new position.

765 596 In the *district of Makaneta*, on the estuary of the Nkomati, the ceremony comprises two successive acts. First there is also a *provisory closing* of the hut, which can take place one month after the death and is accompanied by the family gathering and the religious ceremony. One year later, when the inheritance is adjudicated, the hut is crushed down, but only if it belonged to a headman of the village and if the kraal is obliged to move in

consequence of the death. If it be the hut of one of the subordinates, the roof is simply lifted off and thrown away into the bush.

Another very significant rite in connexion with the closing of the hut is accomplished on the death of the master of the village. A branch is cut from the tree of the village, the tree which was revealed by the divinatory bones as the one near which the headman had to build (See Part II Ch. II) ; half of the branch is placed across the great gate of the village, which is then closed and another gate opened, at some distance, in the fence ; the other half is put over the door of the crushed hut.

There seem to be great variations in the performance of these ceremonies everywhere. I believe, without being able to vouch for it, that when two family gatherings take place during this last period of the mourning, the first is held to proclaim the new master of the village and the second to distribute the inheritance amongst the heirs-at-law. At any rate these two important acts take place at the gatherings. As the inheritance consists mainly of live stock — human stock, the wives of the deceased, I shall describe the adjudication when treating of the fate of widows.

2) Family rites in the Northern clans.

A month after the burial, there is a first gathering of the grave-diggers. They are invited by the widows to a beer-feast. This beer is called : "the beer of the hyenas," as the hyenas also dig graves! No equivocal compliment is intended, the widows merely meaning to thank these men for their services.

In the northern clans, *yindlu a yi yili*, the hut is not taboo. It can be slept in again after the five days of the Great Mourning. The plaster of the doorposts is repaired, and a new crown is put on the top when the hut again finds an owner (1). The feast of the

(1) The hut of a leper alone is considered irremediably tabooed as the sufferer is buried in it. They dig a hole into which he is pushed by means of sticks. The roof is crushed down over him.

l: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

CHAPTER II

THE LIFE OF THE VILLAGE.

621
596 The Thonga village (muti) is not a hap-hazard agglomeration of people. It is a social organism with a well-defined construction and is regulated by strict laws. After all, it is merely an enlarged family: the headman and the old people who have fallen to his charge, his wives, his younger brothers and their wives, his married sons, his unmarried sons and daughters. All these people form a community whose life it is most interesting to study.

Let us describe its outward appearance, the laws of its "foundation" and "moving", its organisation under the headman, the doings of its different members and the rules of etiquette which are observed. While our first chapter gave us an insight into the internal constitution of the Thonga family, this will show us how the social organism, which is at the base of all the tribal life, manifests itself outwardly in the village.

A. THE THONGA VILLAGE.

361 We have already caught a glimpse of it, from the inside, through the eyes of the headman Gidja (p. 128). Now we enter it from outside, as foreigners, with the curiosity of the ethnographer and the philosophical interests of the sociologist.

The Thonga villages present a remarquable uniformity all through the tribe. The same laws regulate their construction in the Ronga as in the Northern clans. Let us suppose that we have left Lourenço Marques and reached the Mabota and Nondwane

361 air circulate, is the goats' kraal (19). It may be placed somewhere
231 else, behind the huts, for instance ; or sometimes goats are tethered
337 every night by the leg to sticks round the hubo. The pigs are
343 never kept on the hubo, but always behind the hut : they are newcomers in the Thonga village and have hardly yet won their "droit de cité." Let us salute, as we pass by, the tree (25) which
361 is, as we shall see, the mystical stem of the village. We may perhaps
824 see, hanging upon it, a piece of clothing offered to the gods, or at its
782 base a broken pot which is the *gandjelo*, the altar of the village.
351 The gandjelo is often placed, by preference, among the poles of the main entrance on the right. The village tree, which has a ritual significance, is not to be confounded with the trees of the hubo (26), which are but *mindjuti*, shade-trees, under which the inhabitants are fond of sitting.

361 So we reach the main hut which faces the gate. This is the
595 dwelling of the headman. In hut 3 lives his second wife, in 4, his third and in 5 his fourth. 2 is called *shilubelo*. Great personages, men owning a large kraal, like to build such a hut, which is smaller than the ordinary ones and where no woman sleeps. It is the headman's own hut, where people *luba*, viz., pay their homage to him; a kind of office of the master of the village! He may sleep in it and summon his wives to come to him there. But he generally prefers to sleep in his wives' huts, one month in each, according to the polygamic custom.

361 Behind 4 and 10 is a *mhala*, a shed for the implements. It is
343 built, like the goats' kraal, without plaster walls, and is smaller
351 than a hut. There may be three or four of these in the village.
596 The headman and his wives occupy the back of the village. At the sides live his younger brothers, one, who has two wives, in 7 and 8, two others, those who have but one wife each, in 9 and in 10 respectively. In 11 lives a married son; in 12 it may be a nephew, son of the headman's sister, or a son-in-law; (see page 252). 13 might be the hut of a stranger (mulubeti), who has
361 asked permission to stay with the headman of the village, as he
574 wished to be under his protection. The case is not frequent, but
783 may occur, and in order to be received into the mystic unity of the community, this man will have to "hlamba ndjaka" (See page 153), together with all the inhabitants of the kraal.

361 together with all the inhabitants of the kraal. The two huts near
313 the entrance are, on the left, the *lao*, where unmarried boys sleep
396 (14) and on the right (15) the *nhangu* where the girls live. Often
356 the nhangu is built behind the huts of the mothers, near the mhala ; in this way the girls are kept under more effective watch. The boys of the *lao* have to guard the door, which they close at night where it is the custom to do so. The *hubo* and the *bandla*, the squares, are generally kept quite clean.

361 In front of each hut is a *yard* (*ndangu* pl. *mindangu*, 23) which
372 is also generally well swept. In the centre of each of these are
417 some broken pots (mapseko), or pieces of hard clay taken from
351 ant-hills (psirubu) ; this is the *fireplace (shitiko)*, where the mistress of the hut cooks her food. The fence round the yard used, as a rule, to be made of poles or even trunks of trees planted near each other and forming a circular wall. Nowadays, especially amongst the Rongas, these yards are enclosed with reeds and may be built square, a single wall fencing off as many as three or four huts. The top of this wall is sometimes crenelated. I rather think this arrangement is modern ; the circular wall of the ndangu
585 is an old custom, as is proved by the following fact. On the day of
538 *hloma*, when the bride's-maids and female relatives bring the bride to her husband, they not only build up the woodpile (shigiyane, see page 112), but, in the northern clans, they must also erect a new ndangu which will be called *tsandana*, and so people will know that in the yard there is a *nhlomi*, a bride, working for her mother-in-law! The ndangu is the place where women tell folk-tales of the tribe to the children and to each other, whilst they attend to their cooking, or after the evening meal.

361 If cleanliness prevails on the square and in the yards, the
356 same cannot be said of the region between the huts and the
235 fence. This is called *mahosi* or *makotini*. It is the place where
351 old baskets and broken pots are kept. The chicken houses
343 (*shihahlu*, 27) are built there ; these are generally little huts, with reed walls, placed on a floor of palmtree boards, supported by four poles forked at their upper extremities. The *ash-heaps* are somewhat further on (24). They are called *tala*, and play a part in certain rites, representing, as it would seem, the place of desolation and of sorrow.

in the bandla, and it is strictly reserved for them. Women are allowed to penetrate into it only when they bring food. Boys must remove the ashes from the fireplace, not women. The *hubo*, on the contrary, is open to all. A shed is sometimes built on it to afford shelter during the rainy days. There are special acts always performed on the hubo : the cutting up (shindla), the slaughtering and butchery of animals and the feast of "eating the head." The head of any slaughtered ox belongs to the men, and they eat it together on the hubo (See letter C.). It is the business of the young men to keep the hubo clean, and they sometimes assemble to pull up the grass which may have grown on it. In former times it was taboo to come to the hubo with sandals. Sandals are used for hunting and must be taken off before entering the village.

Another place to which I have already alluded is the *bukuele*, the "place of jealousy," where angry co-wives insult each other! On our diagram it would be located between 5 and 4, for the wives of the headman.

The Thonga village, this closed circle of huts, is a living organism. All its members form a whole whose unity is remarkable. This common life never appears in a more striking form than at the evening meal. Let us look at our diagram. In every yard the mistress of the hut has cooked her mealies and her sauce in different pots, and, when the sun sets, she distributes the contents (phamela) in wooden or earthen plates. The largest is for the husband. He sits on the bandla with his companions, the other men of the village, and the youths waiting for the meal. All these plates, generally carried by small girls or boys, are brought from all sides to the men's gathering. All do not necessarily contain the ordinary mealies pap ; some are filled with manioc, some with sweet potatoes, etc. The men attack the first plate, all of them taking the food with their fingers. They pass on to the second and so on to the last. Meanwhile each mother has filled other smaller plates, one for the girls, one for the boys, one for herself. She has even sent to each of the other women of the village a little of her cooking, and the others have done the same to her ; so each member of the community, when

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361 he or she has finished the meal, will have eaten a little of all
596 that has been cooked on all the fires. It is impossible to
264 imagine a more perfect communism than this as regards food!
476 I myself witnessed this custom of the evening meal in Spoon Libombo's village in Rikatla. Amongst the inhabitants of the kraal there were two blind male adults, the wife of one of them being half blind herself; the wife of the other was an old woman who could hardly till a few square yards of mealies and ground-nuts, and keep the birds and the hens away from them. Spoon's wife and the wife of another man of the village alone were healthy and able to work normally. So the whole burden rested on their shoulders, as the share the other women could take in the feeding of the men was necessarily small. However I never heard Spoon-grumble; being the headman, he made it a point of honour that all the people dwelling with him should have enough to eat. Everybody who has lived with South African Natives has admired their wonderful readiness to share any food they may have with those present. Even children are much superior in this respect to White children. I attribute this virtue to the community of food which reigns in the Bantu village, and which is certainly one of the most attractive features of Kafir socialism. Village life has not taught the Thongas merely bad habits.

B. MOVING A VILLAGE AND FOUNDING A NEW ONE.

621 Large kraals similar to the one shown in our illustration
754 were more numerous in former times than now. It is rare to
596 meet with such a number of huts and so many people under one headman. Why? Because, say my informants, the superstition of witchcraft has considerably increased in later times. Suppose the wife of one of the younger brothers should
[787] die; the divinatory bones reveal that this death is due to a witch; they go so far as to designate one of the wives of the headman as guilty. No common life is any longer possible. The widower will move elsewhere and build a fence around his

621 754 596 own huts to protect them against would-be-witches. In this way many villages are broken up by fear of witchcraft. Generally speaking the Thonga village cannot long remain of any considerable size; it tends to fall to pieces.

But there are other causes which may destroy the village and the idyllic life of the small community. The death of the headman, and lightning striking the village, are the two main causes which may bring about this event.

765 596 621 787 *Death of the headman.* There is a mystic tie between this man and the social organism which is under him. Should he die, the village dies also... It is not abandoned at once. The whole year of mourning will elapse before the moving. But as soon as the widows and property have been distributed, the successor of the deceased will go and found his own village and the old one will remain a ruin (rumbi). Should any one else die, his hut will merely be thrown into the bush and the village will not be abandoned. But should these deaths increase, then the divinatory bones may order the place to be deserted, as it is defiled and dangerous.

821 756 787 621 If *lightning* strikes the hubo, it is a very bad omen. The medicine man who has the power to "treat the place struck by lightning" is called in. Should he be able to exhume from the ground the mysterious bird which causes lightning, or at least the coagulated urine which it has deposited, and which is called Heaven (See Part VI), the people are allowed to stay. But if he does not discover it deep down in the soil, the village must move, as the presence of the mysterious power of Heaven inside the circle of huts would bring disaster. This is a taboo.

621 787 596 Another cause of moving is the *exhaustion of the gardens.* When the fields are "tired" (karala) and do not produce sufficient food for the inhabitants, they leave the place and look for pastures new. In that case the bones will be consulted. Sometimes, even, the village may be transported elsewhere for the sole reason that the people are tired of the place and want to change. If the bones confirm their wishes, they will move.

621 596 *The founding of a new village* is the occasion of most interesting and characteristic rites, which afford us a new [illegible]

621/396 nature of that social unit, the Thonga *muti*. I shall give the sequence of these rites first in the Northern clans, according to the description of Viguet, and secondly amongst the Ba-Ronga, according to Mboza.

I. *In the Northern clans.*

621/787/784 1) The headman goes first to examine some spots where he would like to build. He *breaks small twigs* from various trees and brings them home.

833 2) The bones are consulted and help in *making a choice*. The twigs are placed on a mat one after the other. When the stone of the *kanye* (see Part VI) falls in a certain way in front of one of the twigs, this shows that the tree from which it has been broken is the one near which the hut of the headman must be built.

3) Building material is collected. When everything is ready to proceed to the construction of the huts, the headman goes with his principal wife to the spot chosen. They leave the old village for ever ; they must not return to it any more. In the evening they have *sexual relations* in the new place and in the morning they tie together some tufts of living grass. Next day all the people of the old village must come and step upon this grass. This rite is called to *tie the village* (boha muti).

621/595/784/834 4) Then begins the period, of about one month, called *buhlapfa*, time of moving, which has its laws. Two great taboos dominate it : 1) Sexual relations are absolutely prohibited. Should any one transgress this law, he has sinned gravely against the headman ; he has stolen the village (yiba muti). The headman will be ill, perhaps paralysed. The guilty woman will also be punished : she will not be able to bear children again ; she will be "tied by the village" (bohiwa hi muti). The culprits have "crossed the way of the master of the village" (tjemakanya). Strange to say, the headman himself is bound by this law. He must have no relations *with his younger wives*, because the village belongs to the principal spouse. Should such a transgression be discovered, the work

621 596 833 768 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised community having its own laws, amongst which the most important seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the 621 595 562 768 764 principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her, and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

351 789 621 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 621 829 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

182 mourning over the dead. The inner connexion existing between these
621 three events is that, in all of them, there is a passage. Hence the
183 resemblance of the rites. This striking similarity is, to my mind, the
best proof that the passage rites constitute a peculiar category. When a
829 headman has decided to move, he leaves his old kraal, he *separates* from it, not by the ordinary gate, but by a special opening made at the back of the village. He is not allowed to return to it again. Then, for him and for all his people, begins a *marginal period* of one month or more, the buhlapfa (notice the prefix *bu* which indicates a period here, as in busahana (page 42). We see the village, during these few weeks, put beyond the pale of society. The ordinary laws are suspended, (licencious songs), and many special taboos are enforced (prohibition of sexual relations, fire taboo, water taboo, etc.), just as in the period of mourning; at last the village returns to the ordinary course of life by a final act of purification, the mysterious *hlamba ndjaka*, which seems to be the most powerful means of cleansing the collective life. This last ceremony shows that, here, the marginal period has been instituted on account of the uncleaness, the impurity of the old village. Let us remember that in most cases the village has been moved on account of death! All the adult members of the social organism take part in the cleansing (at least in the Northern clans) and so the village begins a new and purified life. No one can deny the deep significance of all these rites and the mystic conception of the Thonga village.

C. THE HEADMAN AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE VILLAGE.

596 Each village thus possesses its superior (hosi), its master. He
576 is called *munumzane* or *numzane*, a curious expression which is
621 also employed in Zulu; it means owner of a kraal, gentleman,
618 and is often used in saluting grown up men. We have seen the mystic relation between the headman and his *muti*. The village, the muti, is the primitive social organism. The clan (tiko), which is the gathering of all the *miti*, reproduces all the features of the
622 village life on a large scale. So the *numzane* corresponds to the
596 *hosi*, chief of the tribe. Both certainly possess great authority,

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622 596 264 554 but it must not become tyrannical. They must govern for the benefit of their subordinates.

This peculiar position of the numzane amongst his people is illustrated, in a striking way, by the laws of distribution of the joints of meat on the day when the headman kills an ox to feast them. The various portions must be distributed to the relatives according to the place which they occupy in the family. The headman, nominal proprietor of the ox, will keep the breast (shifuba). This is not only the sternum and the ribs, but most of the viscera which are contained in them. The tripe, the heart, the kidneys will be put all together inside the stomach, and constitute what is called *nkopfu wa homu*. The headman will probably send the heart and the kidneys to his wives (tinkosikazi, his queens!). The brother who comes next will receive one of the hindlegs ; the third in rank one of the forelegs. The elder son will eat the second hindleg, and the younger son the second foreleg. They will eat this meat with their families, or houses (tiyindlu). This custom is very old (1).

Let us continue with the distribution. To the brothers-in-law, or to the relatives-in-law generally, the tail is sent. It is the portion of the sister. But it does not consist only of the tail properly so-called ; it comprises all the hind parts of the animal, especially the rump (kondjo). The malume (maternal uncle) receives part of the loins (muhlubula). The liver is put aside for the grandfather and the old people generally, because it is soft and they have no teeth to gnaw the bones. The head belongs to all the men of the village, who must eat it on the hubo, as we have seen. They may give the tongue (ndjaka) to the old men. It

622 596 264 554 618 (1) This custom is illustrated in a very interesting manner by the relative position of the three clans occupying the South of the Bay. They are all descended from Tembe (See page 23). *Tembe*, the ancestor, representing the elder branch of the royal family, ate the chest. He was the superior (hosi), and this rank is still held by his descendants in the direct line. *Sabi* or Mpanyele, the second brother, or son of the second brother, ate the hindleg ; he was established later on in the Mathuthweni district, between Tembe and Maputju. *Maputju*, the younger brother, head of the third branch, ate the foreleg. But he revolted against his elder brother and carved out for himself a kingdom which very soon became stronger than those of Tembe and Mathuthweni. Mathuthweni became more or less independent. But when people wish to remind the Maputju people of their inferior origin, they say to them : "Tembe ate the breast, Sabi the hindleg and Maputju the foreleg !"

622 is taboo for the women to eat it, or the under lip (See p. 184).
576 From each limb a small piece is taken (tshumbuta) and
264 placed on a skewer; it is the portion of the shepherds and of
554 the butchers, (makotjo ya babyisi). (See the tale of Piti, *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga*, page 152). Sometimes the shepherds also receive the lungs and the spleen.

This way of distributing ox meat is called "ku tlhaba homu ba-hamba milao," viz., "to kill an ox according to rule." Should a younger brother or a son kill an ox, he will send the breast to the master of the village, but he keeps all the limbs and does not observe the rules because, as he says: "It is enough to pay taxes to the chief of the country." Often one of the legs is sent to the chief of the clan.

Strange to say when a goat is killed none of these prescribed rules are followed, as they only concern the oxen.

622 These customs show clearly the position of the headman;
596 he is the master but also the father of his subordinates, and their provider.

1) He must *watch* over the village (basopa, Dutch word passop, universally adopted by the Natives). During the night, if his son is away working in Johannesburg, he takes care that no lovers come into the huts of his daughters-in-law, (a langusa bumbuye), and if he happens to catch one, he will make him pay the fine.

622 2) He is a true *justice of peace* amongst the inmates of the
692 village, doing his best to maintain good relations amongst them.
578 Suppose for instance that the pigs belonging to one of the inhab-
685 itants come out of their enclosure and over-run the gardens of another man. This man will go and say to the owner of the pigs:
643 "Such and such a thing has happened, please close the pigs' kraal more carefully." Should the same thing happen a second time, he will complain to the *numzane*. The headman will then go to the culprit and say: "You have not heeded the warning; you must pay compensation (djiha)." If the culprit listens to the "voice of the blood" (bushaka), he will obey and the matter will end smoothly; if not, the headman can only keep silent: he has no soldiers, no means of enforcing his judgment; the plaintiff will then go to the chief of the tribe to complain. The case will be

578 judged before the Court, in the capital, because the offender has
685 refused to follow the way of persuasion, he has "mocked the family
643 love" (a yalile bushaka). Such misdemeanours are very frequent
692 in the life of the village. Most of the Natives bear philosophically with these annoyances. Should some one, however, be really ill-natured, and wear out their patience (wa ku karata), he will be
685 forced to build a hut for himself, alone, outside the village. If the
672 damage is done by *children*, if they have stolen sweet potatoes, as
622 we have seen, the wronged proprietor gives them a good thrash-
732 ing but does not claim a fine. Occasionally the headman himself
689 thrashes them in presence of their father, and the father will say to them: "You see the numzane will beat you if you are not good." Children who mock at cripples are also severely beaten by him, all the more so as, in this case, the offended party has the right of claiming a fine.

622 3) The headman also possesses *authority over his younger brothers*
596 *and his children*. He can even confiscate their money if one of
675 them is addicted to drinking and ruins his property. However his authority in this respect must not be overstepped, and the headman must take care how he exercises it, as it is based more or less on sufferance. The younger brothers, for instance, maintain the right of making contracts, especially lobola contracts. Should the numzane restrict their liberty too much, they will leave him and found their own villages. A successful headman is he who knows how to keep the whole family together to the general satisfaction.

622 4) The headman has also the right of imposing *statute labour*,
596 especially when the oxen kraal must be rebuilt, or when the
466 weeds must be removed from the hubo ; he sends his young men to do the work. But he must not exact too much from his people or forget to feast them with beer or with meat when the work is finished.

622 5) Lastly the headman *presides over all the discussions* which take
596 place in the village. He is the master of the hubo. The discussion can be conducted in three different places ; when it deals with a secret matter, the men go *inside the hut* ; they debate the matter indoors (ba bulabula ndlwen). Private questions

622 affecting the life of the village are generally settled there.
596 Questions discussed with strangers and those regarding which there is no secrecy, and in which every one can take part, are discussed *on the central square*, on the "hubo". *Hubo* means the square, and also the council of the men of the village which the headman summons there to settle matters (ku khanela timhaka). Should they be able to come to an agreement together or with their visitors who have come to bring a claim, the matter is "cut" (ba tjema mhaka), viz., "ended". In the opposite case, when they disagree altogether, the question will be carried to a third place, before the *hubo of the chief*, in the capital. (See Part III).

562 Every one is welcome to take part in the discussions except women. As a rule men speak as little as possible with women on these matters. If a husband has a sensible, discreet wife, he may ask her advice. But if he has agreed with his companions on a point and changes his mind after having spoken with his wife, he will be severely blamed and accused of "spoiling the village" (hona muti).

622 The headman is more or less *responsible for all the claims*
596 lodged against his subordinates. Should one of his younger
672 brothers be prosecuted for a debt, the creditors will go to the numzane, and he cannot say: "This matter does not concern me." He will say to his brother: "Pay your debt," and, if the brother has no funds, he will help him, if possible, but it is only a loan, and the younger brother will pay back the money. As a rule members of the same family help each other in these matters. This is so much the custom that children are expected to pay the debts of their deceased parents, even if they have not inherited anything from them. This does not however procede from a moral sense of family dignity. They do it because the native authorities hold them responsible. They might be "arrested". In the case of a father who has died still owing some lobola money, the children will try to pay, but they will do it in order to obtain possession of the woman. Should a father have committed adultery with a married woman, and die without having paid the fine, his heirs are not considered responsible. On the other hand, if the father has been condemned as a wizard

622 by the chief, and dies, his heirs must pay the compensation
596 claimed. All these rules clearly illustrate the communism of
622 family life and family property, under the supervision of the headman.

Should a numzane be absolutely unable to govern his village, 622 *the family council can depose him* and put another man in his 596 place. This council will be formed of old relatives, especially the paternal uncles to whom the younger brothers will go and complain of the misbehaviour of their headman. A younger brother will then be proclaimed and the elder will be despised. They will say: "Hi singe! A fahla muti, a hluli hi muti!" "He is a fool! He breaks the village; he is overcome by the village," viz., not able to keep up his position.

As regards the *law of succession* to the headmanship, the second brother takes the place of the elder, and so on. The son of the elder cannot become headman until all his paternal uncles are dead. We shall find this principle also observed in the succession of the chiefs. (Part III.)

D. DAILY LIFE IN THE VILLAGE.

461 From the oxen kraal to the huts, from the square to the little wood, through the doors and in the reed yards, black forms are moving to and fro. Everybody seems busy. There is talking, laughing, playing and working. The expression "working like a nigger" is hardly applicable, for they do not kill themselves with work. It would, however, be quite as great a mistake to believe that the Natives spend all their time in loafing about. Far from it!

1. *Women's occupations.*

462 Women, especially, are very busy. When the sun rises, they 511 emerge from their huts, wash their faces, and light a little fire to warm the mealie pap which was left from the evening meal.

273 1) Men's favourite pastime in South Africa is *drinking beer*.
273 There are no bars on the velt... But every village is from time
574 to time a brewery and a drinking place. Beer is prepared in large
596 quantities. As we shall see, the brewing lasts about nine days.
Near Lourenço Marques, Natives fill not only pots but big casks
with it! One of the jugs is put aside for the headman to try it.
He must pour a little of it into the *gandjelo* ; this religious act is
obligatory. Next day the men of the village assemble in the
morning to sample it also, and, at noon, all the friends from the
273 neighbouring villages arrive. Everybody is welcome. Even a
574 leper can take part in the beer-drinking ; but he will come with
596 his own calabash and they will fill it with a special ladle. As a rule
near neighbours also bring their calabashes, but people coming
from afar are not expected to do so. The beer is drunk with great
haste. Before it is all finished, the headman puts aside a pot for
his father-in-law, his uterine nephew, and the friend who invited
him on a previous occasion... Of course after having filled their
stomachs, men and women dance on the hubo in the afternoon,
and especially in the evening, when the moon shines ; the shouting
sometimes becomes dreadful when drunkenness has overcome all

000 the rain which was pouring down. Suddenly I noticed the Wahungana family returning from the garden in the same order as the week before : in front Leye with the bundle of wood, the basket of vegetables, the hoe and the baby on her back, followed by the children, and behind, the father with the protective umbrella. "Such are the fruits of my efforts." I thought ! But I refused to consider myself beaten. I said to myself : "I will speak to them once more ! The women will certainly be on my side, these poor over-worked women !"

On the following Sunday Nesheye (one of the best Christian women of the congregation) came to see me after the sermon. She had something to tell me... She said : "You observe us, and you wonder at certain things. We also, on our side are observing you, and we see things which we also do not understand. When your wife does the washing, you remain standing by and do not help her. With us it is the men who do the washing. Again, we have seen your wife sewing and mending your clothes and the clothes of the children, and you beside her, not thinking of helping her. With us it is the men who mend the clothes."

Having spoken thus, Nesheye put her two hands joined together on the mat, then separated them as if she were cutting something in two, and said to me : "That is the way your forefathers distributed the work, a little heap here and another little heap there ; and they said : This is the work of men and that the work of women. Our forefathers proceeded in the same way, and said : This is men's work and that is women's work... We must leave it so. The Gospel has not to concern itself with these matters. We do not wish to have the reputation of being lazy and you do not wish it either."

(From the *Journal de l'Unité des Frères*, January 1926.)

regiment, with its counsellors at its head, is called in turn by the organisers of the army; (at Zihlahla they were Mahagane, the chief's uncle, and Mpompi), and the several companies of the regiments form ranks one behind the other. I have already described this imposing circle, when treating of the coronation of the chief. Every warrior can take in at a glance the entire assemblage. Seen from the interior, it is an unbroken circle of shields, resting perpendicularly on the ground, and all touching; behind, a crowd of men, the greater the number, the deeper the ranks, a forest of feathers waving above their heads.

The mukhumbi is not however a perfect circle. It is rather like a *horse shoe*, as there remains an *opening* (nyangwa or sangwa), which gives access into it. On either side of this *door* the regiment of the young men takes up its position; the Dhlanazo in the Nkuna mukhumbi and the Ndumakazulu in that of Zihlahla. At the opposite end, facing the entrance, is the *chest of the army* (shifuba sha yimpi), where the chief stands surrounded by the men of riper age, the strongest of whom act as a body guard. Between the chest and the opening, on both sides, the middle-aged warriors occupy the wings, the elder ones nearer the chest, the younger nearer the entrance. This disposition is highly significant; notice that it is exactly the same as that of the village itself, a large door (mharana); on both sides of the entrance, the huts of the unmarried inhabitants (lao and nhanga); at the back the huts of the headman, and, at the sides, those of his younger brothers. The idea of age and of hierarchy entirely dominates both these social manifestations!

As regards the numerical strength of the mukhumbi, one of my informants who belonged to the Ndumakazulu regiment —young men from 19 to 25 years old—told me that he estimated the war strength of his regiment at about 500 men: the entire Zihlahla circle might be put at 2000 strong.

I have often seen the Nkuna mukhumbi assembled. I had even the opportunity of addressing its warriors during the Sikororo war of 1901. They were between five and six hundred in all. But this clan is very much scattered and many warriors were not present.